

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MADRID 03439 201724Z

44

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 (ISO) W

----- 112674

O 201636Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1894

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3439

EXDIS

BONN FOR THE SECRETARY

ANKARA FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SP, MO

SUBJ: SPANISH SAHARA

REF: STATE 116051

SUMMARY: I INFORMED CORTINA MAY 19 OF US CONCERN OVER DEVELOPMENTS ON SPANISH SAHARA AND OF US CONTINUED HOPE THAT PROBLEM COULD BE RESOLVED PEACEFULLY. CORTINA DESCRIBED SPANISH POLITICON AT SOME LENGTH INDICATING SPANISH DESIRE TO LEAVE SAHARA, BUT PREFERABLY IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WOULD ASSURE SAHARAN INDEPENDENCE AND PREVENT OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES IN AREA. MOROCCAN PROPOSAL FOR THREE-PARTY DISCUSSIONS WAS A STEP FORWARD, BUT NO SATISFACTORY NEGOTIATION COULD BE HELD WITHOUT ALGERIA. HE HOPED US COULD HELP BOTH WITH REGARD TO ALGERIA AND PERSUADING MOROCCANS THAT ALGERIAN PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT INDISPENSABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. I SAW FOREIGN MINISTER CORTINA ALONE AFTERNOON MAY 19

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MADRID 03439 201724Z

TO COVERA NUMBER OF MATTERS REPORTED SEPARATELY. WITH

RESPECT TO SPANISH SAHARA, I TOLD CORTINA THAT USG WAS CONCERNED OVER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WITH REGARD TO SPANISH SAHARA AND THAT WE INTENDED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER VERY SHORTLY WITH THE MOROCCANS. I ADDED THAT OUR POSITION ON THIS QUESTION HAD NOT CHANGED AND THAT WE STILL HOPED THAT THE PROBLEM COULD BE RESOLVED PEACEFULLY. I TOLD CORTINA THAT I WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM LATER TO INFORM HIM OF THE OUTCOME OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE MOROCCANS.

2. CORTINA THEN LAUNCHED INTO A LONG, FRANK AND, AT TIMES, IMPASSIONED STATEMENT REGARDING THE SPANISH POSITION ON THE SAHARA.

3. CORTINA SAID THAT THE SAHARA HAD NEVER BEEN PART OF MOROCCAN TERRITORY AND MOROCCO'S CLAIM HAD NO VALIDITY. SPAIN'S ONLY INTEREST AT THE PRESENT TIME IS TO GET OUT OF THE SAHARA AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. IT HAS NO DESIRE FOR A CONFRONTATION WITH ANYBODY OVER THIS QUESTION, BUT BY THE SAME TOKEN, AS IT STILL REMAINS IN THE SAHARA, IT CANNOT STAND IDLY BY IF THE MOROCCANS LAUNCH ANY MILITARY VENTURE. SPAIN HAS ACCEPTED THE UN INVOLVEMENT IN THE MATTER BOTH THROUGH THE RESOLUTION ON SELF-DETERMINATION AND ON THE ICJ, BUT IT HAS BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO TAKE ANY POSITION WHICH WOULD VALIDATE THE MOROCCAN CONTENTION THAT THE SAHARA ISSUE IS A BILATERAL ISSUE BETWEEN SPAIN AND MOROCCO. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT SPAIN HAS OPPOSED THE NAMING OF AD HOC JUDGES BY THE ICJ AS THE MOROCCANS DESIRE. OBVIOUSLY, IF THE ICJ NAMES SUCH JUDGES THAT IS WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE COURT, BUT SPANISH OPPOSITION WILL BE ON THE RECORD.

4. IN CORTINA'S VIEW, NEITHER MAURITANIA NOR ALGERIA CAN COUNTENANCE MOROCCAN SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE SAHARA. MAURITANIA IS IN A MUCH WEAKER POSITION VIS-A-VIS MOROCCO AND HAS RECENTLY APPEARED TO SIDE WITH THE MOROCCAN POINT OF VIEW. THIS MAY BE DUE TO THE MAURITANIAN VIEW THAT ITS PURPOSES WOULD BE BETTER SERVED BY "NOT REJECTING MOROCCO'S OUTSTRETCHED HAND" THAN BY OUTWARD OPPOSITION TO MOROCCO'S AIMS. ALGERIA, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO MOROCCO'S CLAIMS AND WOULD OPPOSE THEM. CORTINA SAID THAT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MADRID 03439 201724Z

IN HIS VIEW THE IDEAL SOLUTION WOULD BE ONE NEGOTIATED BETWEEN SPAIN, MOROCCO, MAURITANIA, AND ALGERIA WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE SPANISH TO WITHDRAW IN FAVOR OF AN INDEPENDENT SAHARA WHOSE INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE GUARANTEED BY THE DANGERS OF CONFRONTATION WHICH WOULD ARISE IF ANY ONE OF THE OTHER THREE COUNTRIES TOOK A MOVE AGAINST THAT INDEPENDENCE. OF COURSE, OF THE THREE PLUS AN INDEPENDENT SAHARA SHOULD AGREE ON SOME OTHER ARRANGEMENT, THAT WOULD BE OF

NO CONCERN TO SPAIN.

5. CORTINA CONFIRMED INFORMATION IN MADRID'S 3382 THAT THERE HAD BEEN A NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE MOROCCAN POSITION. KING HASSAN HAD PROPOSED TO THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR THAT THERE BE DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SPAIN, MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA AND INDICATED THAT FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD HAD DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO RABAT LET IT BE KNOWN HE WOULD BE WILLING TO HAVE SUCH CONVERSATIONS HELD IN PARIS WITH HIMSELF ACTING IN CAPACITY AS "TEMOIN DE QUALITE" (WHICH I PRESUME MEANS DISINTERESTED SPONSO). GOS HAD CHECKED THIS LATTER POINT OUT WITH GOF AND LEARNED THAT GISCARD HAD INDICATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO ACT IN SUCH CAPACITY FOR DISCUSSIONS IN PARIS BETWEEN "ALL THE PARTIES" CORTINA COMMENTED THAT IT SEEMED MOST UNLIKELY THAT GISCARD WOULD HAVE AGREED TO SPONSOR DISCUSSIONS ON SAHARA WHICH EXCLUDED ALGERIA, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF GISCARD'S RECENT VISIT TO ALGERIA.

6. CORTINA SAID THAT GOS REPLY TO KING WAS THAT IT COULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS WHERE ONE OF THE INTERESTED PARTIES, I.E. ALGERIA, WAS NOT INCLUDED. CORTINA STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS MOROCCAN PLOY DID REPRESENT AN IMPROVEMENT IN THAT THE MOROCCANS NOW ADMITTED THAT THE QUESTION WAS NOT JUST A BILATERAL ONE BETWEEN MOROCCO AND SPAIN.

7. CORTINA SAID THAT THEUS COULD BE OF GREAT HELP IN THIS SITUATION BY DOING TWO THINGS. THE FIRST WOULD BE TO ENCOURAGE ALGERIA IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE AND TO STRENGTHEN ITS LINKS WITH THE WEST. HE RECOGNIZED PROBLEMS WHICH ALGERIA CAUSED ON PETROLEUM AND RAW MATERIALS QUESTIONS, BUT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO ENCOURAGE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 MADRID 03439 201724Z

ALGERIA TO MAINTAIN A MODERATE LINE. THE SECOND POINT ON WHICH WE COULD BE HELPFUL WOULD BE TO TRY TO PERSUADE THE MOROCCANS THAT NO SETTLEMENT OF THE SAHARA QUESTION WOULD BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF ALGERIA.

8. WITH RESPECT TO ICJ DELIBERATIONS, CORTINA SAID THAT OUT OF COURTESY TO THE COURT, THE PARTIES SHOULD NOT IGNORE ITS DELIBERATIONS AND SHOULD AWAIT ITS FINDINGS. HOWEVER, IF IN THE MEANTIME (WHICH HE DOUBTED) NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED SHOULD LEAD TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSIN, THEN WHATEVER THE COURT MIGHT ULTIMATELY DECIDE WOULD BE WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE. THE GOS WAS PREPARED TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE IN ASSISTING AN INDEPENDENT SAHARA IN ITS DEVELOPMENT.SPAIN HAD NO INTERESTS IN THE PHOSPHATES. HOWEVER, IF THIS MATTER SHOULD

DRAG ON ENDLESSLY, AND TO AVOID A POSSIBLE FURTHER MILITARY CONFRONTATION IN THE AREA, SPAIN MIGHT ONE DAY DECIDE UNILATERALLY TO WITHDRAW. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT IF THIS WERE THE CASE, AN ARMED CONFLICT WOULD ENSUE INVOLVING MOROCCO, ALGERIA AND, OBVIOUSLY TO A LESSER EXTENT, HVJRITANIA, WITH SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR STABILITY IN NORTH AFRICA.
STABLER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDEPENDENCE, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MADRID03439
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750177-0513
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750536/aaaabgfq.tel
Line Count: 177
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 116051
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 MAY 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <19 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPANISH SAHARA
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SP, MO, SS, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006